

Message Text

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10

ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7921

INFO USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS VIENNA 1697

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PINR, AU

SUBJ: ARREST OF AUSTRIAN GANG REPORTEDLY PLANNING ILLEGAL SALE
OF DEADLY NERVE GAS FOR POSSIBLE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

1. AUSTRIAN POLICE ARRESTED IN VIENNA FEBRUARY 27 FOUR PERSONS CHARGED WITH BEING INVOLVED IN IMPORTATION, PREPARATION AND PLANNED DISTRIBUTION OF A DEADLY NERVE GAS IN CONNECTION PROJECTED CRIMINAL ACTS AND POSSIBLY ACTS OF TERRORISM. ARRESTED WERE 1) JOHANN KOENIGSDORFER, AND AUSTRIAN POSSESSING AND AUSTRALIAN PASSPORT AND USING ALIAS OF JOHN ALLEN KUZ; 2) ANGELA KROTTENDORFER, KOENIGSDORFER'S FORMER GIRLFRIEND AND EMPLOYEE OF A VIENNA HOTEL; 3) PETER SVOBODA, REPORTEDLY THE GROUP'S UNDERWORLD CONTACT AND 4) PETER SCHAUER, PRODUCER OF PRONOGRAPHIC MOVIES ACCORDING TO POLICE RECORDS. AUSTRIAN POLICE REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN TIPPED OFF SOMETIME IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1975 ABOUT THE GANG'S PLANS AND HAD COORDINATED THE ARRESTS IN VIENNA WITH SIMILAR ARREST IN BERLIN INVOLVING RICHARD KOENIGSDORFER, JOHANN KOENIGSDORFER'S BROTHER, WHO REPORTEDLY MANUFACTURED THE GAS FROM RAW MATERIALS OBTAINED EITHER IN GERMANY OR CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

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2. AUSTRIAN POLICE SEIZED IN VIALS AND CONTAINERS

EQUIVALENT OF MORE THAN QUART OF DEADLY NERVE GAS KNOWN AS DFP (DIISOPROPYLFLUOROPHOSPHATE), NONE OF WHICH HAD YET BEEN DISTRIBUTED. IN WORLD WAR II THE GAS WAS KNOWN BY GERMAN DESIGNATION "TABUN." TINY DOSES OF THE GAS REPORTEDLY ARE USED IN MEDICAL PRACTICE TO TREAT GLAUCOMA AND INTESTINAL PARALYSIS.

3. ACCORDING TO INITIAL POLICE REPORTS, PLANS WERE BEING PREPARED BY VIENNA GANG TO PEDDLE THE GAS IN NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST AND ON CYPRUS, PRESUMABLY TO QUESTIONABLE ELEMENTS FOR POSSIBLE TERRORIST OPERATIONS. INVESTIGATION OF ORIGIN OF RAW MATERIALS AND OF POSSIBLE CONTACTS WITH ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL TERRORIST GROUPS IS CONTINUING. EMBASSY HAS REQUESTED OFFICIAL REPORT FROM APPROPRIATE AUSTRIAN AUTHORITIES.BUCHANAN

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